REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-15, 18, and 77-83 were pending in the patent application at the time the final Office Action was mailed. By this Amendment, each of these claims has been canceled, and claims 84-102 have been added.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-6, 9-15, 18, and 77-83 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,662,212 ("Chandhok") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,463,461 ("Hanson"). Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 84-98 overcome the applied prior art. Applicants request a personal interview before an additional Office Action so that Applicants' representative can explain in detail the various distinctions between the pending claims and the Chandhok and Hanson references. A brief overview of these distinctions is provided herein.

As recited in independent claims 84, 93 and 102, the claims are directed to a method or apparatus for communicating collaborative email messages and non-collaborative email messages, "wherein a collaborative email message is an email message communicated among a plurality of recipients that dynamically incorporates information provided by the recipients into the message content." An email inbox diplsay provides an "indication for distinguishing collaborative email messages from non-collaborative email messages." When a recipient provides requested collaborative information into the body of the message, the modified message is sent to all recipients of the collaborative email message. An email inbox display "provides an indication whenever contents of a collaborative email message have been modified by another recipient since the collaborative email was last opened."

As a first matter, Chandhok is not directed to a system for communicating collaborative emails. While Chandhok discloses a technique for "synchronizing files shared by members of a distributed workgroup through electronic mail," (see Chandhok,

Abstract), Chandhok does not disclose communication of collaborative emails. Instead, Chandhok discloses a technique where emails are sent with a "synchronization command" to reconcile differences in local copies of a document stored on recipients' computers. As Chandhok describes,

> Whenever one of the computers in the system receives an electronic mail message and the user agent resident on that computer detects a synchronization command embodded in the multipurpose internet mail extensions of the internet formatted message, the user agent will synchronize the shared files residing on the computer in the local workspace of that workgroup member.

(Chandhok, Summary, 2:39-45.) Chandhok teaches that this technique "synchronizes files shared by members of a workgroup automatically and in the background." (Chandhok, 3: 19-23.) Accordingly, Chandhok does not disclose communicating "collaborative emails" that dynamically incorporate into a message body information provided by the recipients. Instead, the emails in Chandhok are used "in the background" to synchronize separately-stored files.

Hanson does not disclose a method or system for integrating communications of both collaborative and non-collaborative email messages. First, Hanson does not disclose an email inbox display that provides an indication for distinguishing collaborative email messages from non-collaborative email messages. Second, Hanson does not disclose an email inbox display that provides an indication whenever contents of a collaborative email message have been modified by another recipient since the collaborative email was last opened. In fact, Hanson provides no mention of an email inbox, and is not directed to a method or system for integrating collaborative and non-collaborative email message communications.

As stated above, Applicants respectfully request an opportunity for an in-person interview with the Examiner to expedite prosecution of this application. The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (202) 434-1607 to schedule an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: **September 22, 2006**

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